ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus for coding a binary image representing an object shape includes an inferior symbol detecting unit which decides which one of

5 binary zero and binary one is an inferior symbol that is of smaller occurrence within a given area of the binary image, a divided portion generating unit which divides a rectangular block of the given area into divided portions, a map information generating

10 unit which generates map information for each one of the divided portions, the map information indicating whether a corresponding one of the divided portions has the inferior symbol included therein, and a coding unit which encodes only the divided portions

15 that have the inferior symbol included therein, wherein an identification of the inferior symbol, the map information, and the encoded divided portions are output from the apparatus.